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ADDRESS,
THE BRETHREN PUB. HOUSE,
ASHLAND, Ashland Co., OHIO

ASHLAND, O., May 25, 1887.

The Brethren Church and the Coming Convention.

In the consideration of subjects bearing upon the work of the Convention of the Brethren church to be held in September, it is essential to carry in the mind its condition as it now is, compared with what it was in the organization at Dayton, Ohio, about four years ago. This is necessary that any conclusions drawn regarding the best methods of developing its usefulness in the future, may not be too narrow for general application. In developing plans of work, the field of operation should always form a factor to be considered, as excellent plans in one field are worthless in another.

The Brethren Church now has active congregations in fourteen states and its lines reach from the Atlantic ocean to the Pacific. The sound of the Gospel-alone rings out over the shores of these great waters on each Lord's day morning, and worshipers gather together under this banner to do reverence to the one complete and mighty Law-giver, Christ Jesus.

In the organization at Dayton, there was only a mere handful of brethren who seemed to be inspired by a divine power, to commence this work. If then they could have calmly looked upon the years since passed, with their tribulation, self-sacrifice and labor, they would have wished to escape the task assumed. But they were not disobedient, and already a mighty work has been accomplished in the name of the Lord that otherwise would not have been done.

In Ohio we now remember of eight new churches built by the Brethren, and there may be one or two that we do not think of. Pennsylvania almost or altogether equals this number, eight or ten have been built in Indiana, several in Kansas, one in California, one in Oregon, one or two in Iowa, one in Maryland, two or three in the Virginias and one in Michigan. Flourishing congregations have been built up in Virginia, Maryland, Kansas, Nebraska; Waterloo, Hudson and Dallas Center, Iowa; Lanark and Auburn, Illinois; South Bend, Sweet Home, Milford, Edna Mills, Oakville, North Manchester, and at other points in Indiana; Louisville, Homerville, Glenford, Buckeye City, North Liberty, and in the Miami Valley, in Ohio; Masontown, Myersdale, Vinco, in Armstrong Co., Johnstown, and at other points in Pennsylvania. The gospel-alone banner has been planted and is floating also in Michigan, Missouri, Oregon. Dakota and California. This result is largely due to the ecclesiastical crash that many deplored and still look upon as a great misfortune. But when the result is viewed with a free mind, the conclusion must be that it is the Lord's work and it is very good. It could have been performed in other ways, it would seem, but it was not, and God has moved and other wonders are being performed.

The Church in San Francisco, Cal., was organized in December, 1884, with nine members; last report 24. The Bear Fork church, West Virginia, was organized in September, 1885, with 7 members and it now has 25. Round Hill church, Virginia, was organized March, 1885, with 34 members, now has 113. Pony Creek church, Kansas, organized in August, 1883, with about 30 members, now numbers about 100. Waterloo church, Iowa, was organized during the winter of 1883 and '84 with 81 members, it now has a membership of about 310. Portage church, Ind., organized April, 1884, with 10 members, now numbers 106. Oakville, Ind., organized September, 1886, with seven members, now has over 90. Beaver Dam, Ind, organized with 27 members in 1882, and now has about 110. Like increases have been made at Milford and North Manchester in Indiana. The Conemaugh church in Pennsylvania was organized in September, 1882, with 131 members, now numbers 201. Myersdale church, Pa., organized with 27 members and now has 85. Bethel church, Ohio, was organized in July, 1883, with a small membership; it now numbers 74. Louisville church was organized in June, 1884, with 32 members and it now numbers about 87. In the Miami Valley the work has been very encouraging and hundreds of accessions to the church are recorded.

Other evidences of our forward march are found in the reports of work done in the Master's cause since the first of this year. Among these we find that 14 were added to the church at St. James, Md., in January. A meeting closed near Downey, Pa., Jan. 17, with nine accessions. A revival meeting in Philadelphia closed about the 24th of January with ten additions. In the latter part of January a meeting was held in the Fair View church, Pa., with 12 accessions. On the 30th of January, a revival closed at Ankenytown, Ohio, with 11 additions. A meeting closed at Bunker Hill, Ind, the first of February, with 42 additions. A revival at Falls City, Neb., in February ended with 41 additions. Since February there have been numerous, additions, so there are many things to give encouragement where there is a disposition to thank the Lord and take courage.

But there is one unpleasant feature that lingers with the work, in the way of numerous calls for preaching that can not be filled, and there are many locations where churches could soon be organized if there were available and able men to do the necessary work.

We feel justified in saying that the Brethren Church has already done a grand and noble work, and if Christ should come now and end the state of probation, it would be conspicuous in the great and final gathering.

But the work has only been commenced. This truth should be firmly grasped by the memory and retained in the deliberations that may now be taking place, or that may follow in the coming convention. Next fall should be the way-mark of a new era in the Brethren church. It should commence work on greater and broader plans than it has followed hitherto. There is an urgent demand for a Gospel Church that will send its branches from the river unto the ends of the earth, and penetrate every part of the moral soil by its rootlets.

The unparalleled success of the past should stimulate every brother who has an interest in the Lord's work to press onward in the contest against Satan and sin. God honors faithfulness in his servants and he will reward the one who will sacrifice and suffer persecution to do his work. The servant of Christ who takes pride in doing this will provide for himself a great and exceeding weight of glory.

What is Christian Love?

Our English language, like every other language, is often deficient to express nice distinctions in meaning. One word is frequently called upon to do service in two, five, ten, or even twenty directions of thought. As a consequence of this, an ambiguousness or a confusion of ideas is liable to be in the minds of both those who speak and those who hear those words. And out of such confusion there comes a multitude of evils.

One of these many-phrased English words is "Love." The dictionaries classify the meanings of this word under eight or ten different heads; and in common speech it is recognized as including variously the ideas of desire, affecting attachment, devotedness and good-will. In our English Bible, the word Love has been employed interchangeably with Charity, in the successive translations of the last three centuries. But as Charity has at least half a dozen meanings, not one of which is synonymous with any commonly accepted meaning of Love, this interchange only increases the ambiguity. Since, however, we are directly told that "Love is the fulfilling of the law," and that of all the Christian graces, the chiefest and greatest is Love, it becomes an important matter that we understand the meaning of Christian charity or love.

Christian love is clearly not a matter of mere feeling or emotion. It is not a conscious drawing of the affections toward that which is in itself pleasing and winsome. The good Samaritan was not moved to his exhibit of neighborly love on the Jericho road, by the personal attractiveness of the wounded man. Even in the lower plane of love of gold, or love of praise, or love of power, we do not think of love as emotional; nor yet do we attach this idea to love of country, or love of purity, or love of truth. The love spoken of by the Lord Jesus Christ is not the mere throbbing of the heart with personal feeling, and the outgoing of the emotional nature only; but it is something more serious, more practical, and more attainable than this.

Charity in its narrower sense is almsgiving or liberality toward the needy; in its broader sense it is "liberality in judging of men and their actions," it is "that disposition of heart which inclines men to think favorably of their fellow-men, and to do them good." But in neither sense can charity be exercised toward God, for God is not in need of man's help by generous gifts, or by generous judging; love, however, can reach upward toward God, and outward toward all of God's creatures. There was a gain then when the revisers gave us the word love instead of charity in Paul's writings concerning this grace of graces; for love includes all that can be included in charity and much more also.

Primarily, Christian love has its centre and its starting-point and its impetus from God. God is love. Loving God, not with a mere emotional affection, but with a grateful sense of being God's own, and of having our interests one with God's, we shall look out upon all of God's creatures as linked with us in peculiar relations because of their being peculiarly linked with God; and we shall have love for them because they are loved by him whom we love above all else.

Love is the distinguishing mark of the Christian. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one for another." And as love will work no evil toward anyone, it becomes very practical, and must be the great power that must regulate the Christian life. It is the great antidote to sin. For instance we love the members of our household. We would not think of doing anything that would wrong or harm them. Neither would we wrong or harm our fellow-man if we love them as we ought to. Love will induce us to make others happy, and abstain from that which will bring sorrow and distress.

Again Love implies a self-sacrifice. The great desire to make the objects of our love happy will induce us to do something for their comfort, welfare, or happiness, even if it cost us a little trouble. These features of love make it very practical. This is not an extreme standard of love. It is the Bible standard, pure and simple. Just so far as a Christian fails to recognize, and to conform to this standard, he falls short of Christian love, and is so far guilty of un-Christian conduct.

All of the Lord's teaching, the Lord's institutions, usually called "ordinances" are for the purpose of developing this grand passion. This is the principle of the Bible. This makes heaven, and when the grand old petition uttered for centuries by millions of hearts "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" is fulfilled, then we shall have a heaven below. Therefore brethren, let us remember the tree will be judged by the fruit it has produced, and not by the amount of cultivation that has been bestowed upon it. Do not let us be deceived into the idea that the mere cultivation is the great object of Christianity, the object is the result—the fruit. May God help us with his blessing that the fruit may abundantly be produced.

The catalogue of Ashland College for this year is out, and a copy will be sent to any address on application.

EDITORIAL ITEMS.

The brethren of Ohio will not forget that the Ohio Sabbath School Convention will be held at the Bear Creek church, about six miles west of Dayton; next week, June 2nd, 3rd, and 4th. Arrangements have been made for an interesting meeting, and there should be a large gathering. Brethren ministers in all parts of the State should drop their work, whatever they are engaged in, and attend. A very important Mission Meeting will be held and they should be there. The R. R. fare from Ashland will be $5.50 for the round trip, tickets good till the 6th.

We notice in brother Beer's correspondence that he is coming East and expects to attend the Ohio S. S. Convention.

Bro. W. C. Perry has not been able to do his work at the College the past two weeks on account of a disease in his face. It was very painful, but he is now recovering.

There are several articles left over this week that the writers expected to see printed. But they will serve their purpose next week, and will appear then.

Bro. P. J. Brown is advertised to preach at the M. E. church, in Canaan, Ohio, May 29th, in the evening. All are invited and brethren who live near, are specially invited to attend.

We call the attention of all our readers to the very liberal inducement made for new subscribers to the EVANGELIST for the remainder of this year, and we expect a hearty response in the way of a large list of new names. Now brethren this offer is so liberal that you will have no difficulty in securing a large number if a little effort is made. Let us hear from one and all. Every present subscriber can send in one new name if a little effort is made. Try it.

The B. & O. R. R. Co., are selling thousand mile tickets good for one year at $25.00.

The members of the Board of Trustees of Ashland College, especially those who are near, should feel it a duty to attend the meeting on Thursday of next week, June 2nd.

The Commencement exercises of Ashland College will be held on Thursday of next week, and the Annual Sermon will be preached next Lord's Day at the College at 11 a. m.

Auburn, Ills.

The interest of our cause here is moving on.

The weekly visit of the EVANGELIST is a feast to the soul. If we were not so thronged with work, we would write often for its columns. But there is much to be done here; we have services every alternate Lord's day morning and evening in town, and besides, there are several mission posts in the surrounding country which we are trying to supply with preaching; and in addition to this we have commenced the study of the Greek language which we wish to learn this summer, so we must improve the "golden moments."

May God bless and advance the interest of our cause everywhere is my prayer.

A. M. RIDENOUR.

Philadelphia News.

The Brethren church of this city held her first lovefeast on the evening of May 11th. There were forty-two communicants. As some of us had not communed for over three years, it was indeed a refreshing season to us. Bro. McFaden was ably assisted by Bro. E. B. Shaver, of Virginia

In the discussion as to the manner of feetwashing the fact developed itself that some of the members of this church had never washed feet, though having belonged to the church for ten years or more. This is owing to lack of system. We observed the ordinance by washing one another's feet in the strict sense of the word.

Our total membership at this date is forty-eight. One was baptized last Sunday evening.

JACOB CASSEL.
1207 Columbiana Av., May 14th.